

As a Member of Congress, I am extremely fortunate to call Mark a friend. In fact, Mark and I were junior high and high school classmates and we've taken advantage of our existing friendship to foster a strong working relationship. I will miss his candor and his guidance. I ask my colleagues to join me today to thank General O'Neill, his wife Lori, and his entire family for the commitment, sacrifice and contribution that they have made throughout his honorable military career.

TRIBUTE TO THE 51ST ANNUAL
PUERTO RICAN DAY PARADE

HON. JOSÉ E. SERRANO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 5, 2008

Mr. SERRANO. Madam Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to pay tribute to the 51st Anniversary of the National Puerto Rican Day Parade, which will be held on June 8th, 2008, in New York City. A luminous and star-studded event, this parade proudly recognizes the heritage of Puerto Ricans in the United States, and year after year has proven to be one of our Nation's largest outdoor festivities.

The National Puerto Rican Day Parade is the successor to the New York Puerto Rican Day Parade, which held its inaugural celebration on Sunday, April 12th, 1958, in "El Barrio," Manhattan. The impact of the first Puerto Rican Day Parade in New York was both immediate and resounding. It galvanized thousands of New York Puerto Ricans in a very public, very proud demonstration of their emergence in the City as an important and growing ethnic group. For the next 38 years, the New York Puerto Rican Day Parade grew into a staple of New York's cultural life. In 1995, the overwhelming success of the parade prompted organizers to increase its size and transform it into the national and, indeed, international, affair that it is today.

This magnificent New York institution now includes participation from delegates representing over thirty States, including Alaska and Hawaii, and attracts well over 3 million parade goers every year. In addition, the parade reaches millions more through television broadcasts on network affiliates, Spanish-language stations, and via satellite to viewers the world over.

The great success that the parade enjoys each year is brought about, in large measure, by the continued and tireless efforts of a choice few individuals—women and men of able leadership and strong conviction, who believe, as I do, in the limitless potential of people of Puerto Rican descent. Leading this effort is the National Puerto Rican Day Parade, Inc., a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization designed to foster self-awareness and pride among Puerto Ricans in this country, and in so doing, likewise address issues of economic development, education, cultural recognition, and social advancement.

The Parade's march up New York's Fifth Avenue, while certainly the most visible aspect of the celebration, is hardly the only event associated with the National Puerto Rican Day Parade, Inc.'s activities. Each year more than 10,000 people attend a variety of award ceremonies, banquets and cultural events that strengthen the special relationship shared by Puerto Ricans and the City of New York. Over the years, the two have developed a symbiotic relationship. Puerto Ricans have shared a vibrant and beautiful culture that has helped to transform New York into a dynamic, bilingual city. Meanwhile, the City of New York has enabled Puerto Ricans to flourish economically, culturally and politically.

Each year the parade honors several individuals who have made tremendous contributions not only to the Puerto Rican community but the Nation as a whole. This year's honorees include Dennis Rivera, SEIU Healthcare Chair and former SEIU 1199 President, who will serve as the parade's Grand Marshall; Congresswoman NYDIA VELÁZQUEZ, who will receive the Lifetime Achievement Award; and local merchant, songwriter, performer and community leader Mike Amadeo and Assemblywoman Noemi Rivera who will serve as honorary Godfather and Godmother of the Parade respectively. Parade organizers will also pay tribute to the town of Lajas, located in the southwest corner of Puerto Rico.

Madam Speaker, the National Puerto Rican Day Parade captures the spirit of this special relationship. It celebrates the myriad ways that Puerto Ricans enrich the traditions of this country, and sends a clear signal to all who witness it, that the Puerto Rican community, both in New York and nationally, represents an exquisite tapestry of individuals. As a Puerto Rican and a New Yorker, and someone who participates in this parade annually, I can attest that the reverberations of this day are both vast and glorious. They can be seen on the faces and heard in the streets, as millions come together to joyously proclaim their heritage. And so it is, Madam Speaker, that with a full and proud heart, I stand before you and my colleagues in Congress to pay tribute to the sights, sounds and wonder that is the National Puerto Rican Day Parade.

TRIBUTE TO THE 300TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE INCORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF KILLINGLY, CONNECTICUT

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 5, 2008

Mr. COURTNEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 300th anniversary of the incorporation of the town of Killingly, Connecticut. Over the course of 2008, Killingly's residents have and will continue to celebrate 300 years of history.

Killingly's ability to adapt and to transform with modern advancements have been evident

since early settlement. Although the original settlement was rooted in agriculture production, like other colonial towns, modern amenities such as taverns, blacksmith shops, grist and saw mills were prevalent. By the end of the 18th century, William Danielson developed a successful iron works and William Cundall created one of Connecticut's earliest woolen works. With these modern amenities and connection with the New England railroad network, Killingly soon grew to an industrial hub.

Over the past 300 years, Killingly has been the setting for momentous events as well as home and birthplace to many notable figures in American history. In 1750, Israel Proctor deeded his land to his servants, laying a progressive foundation for successive abolitionist, Henry Hammond, and an Underground Railroad network. In addition, Mary Dixon Kies, the first woman in the U.S. to receive a patent, and Charles Lewis Tiffany, founder of Tiffany & Co., were both born and raised in Killingly.

Madam Speaker, for 300 years Killingly and its residents have adapted, endured, and thrived in light of significant pressures from changing local, national and international dynamics. On Saturday, May 31, 2008, I had the pleasure of participating in a tercentennial parade. The outpouring of support and warm wishes from Killingly citizens was truly telling of the strength and unity of this community. On this tercentennial, I ask my colleagues to join with me and my constituents with honoring and celebrating this 300th anniversary.

DIANE CECCHETTINI

HON. DAVID G. REICHERT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 5, 2008

Mr. REICHERT. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate MultiCare Health System CEO Diane Cecchettini for earning the 2008 "CEO IT Achievement Award" from Modern Healthcare Magazine and the Healthcare Information and Management System Society, HIMSS.

Ms. Cecchettini will receive her award during National Health IT Week, which calls attention to the need for health information technology to provide better, more affordable health care for all Americans. Health IT enables health care providers with a more comprehensive view of patients' health histories, making care more accurate and less costly. I commend Ms. Cecchettini and Multicare for adopting an electronic medical records system that is improving the quality of care for their patients and reducing administrative burdens and costs. The Pacific Northwest remains a hub of technological innovation, and it is encouraging to see networks like MultiCare using technological advances to enhance the lives of their patients.

I offer my sincere congratulations to Ms. Cecchettini and MultiCare's network of health organizations for receiving this honor.